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All other information and disclaimers are in the text header below.

NEWSLINE RADIO - CBBS EDITION #890 - POSTED 09/03/94

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The following is late news about Amateur Radio for Radio Amateurs as prepared from NEWSLINE RADIO scripts by the staff of the AMATEUR RADIO NEWSLINE, INC. -- formerly the WESTLINK RADIO NETWORK. For current information updates, please call

Audio Version of Newsline

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For further information about the AMATEUR RADIO NEWSLINE, please write to us with an SASE at P.O. Box 463, Pasadena, CA 91102.

Thank You
NEWSLINE

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Some of the hams of NEWSLINE RADIO...

WA6ITF WB6MQV WB6FDF K6DUE W6RCL N6AHU N6AWE N6TCQ K6PGX N6PNY
KU8R N8DTN W9JUV KC9RP K9XI KB5KCH KC5UD KC0HF G8AUU WD0AKO DJ0QN
and many others in the United States and around the globe!!!

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Newsline report number 890, for release on Friday, September 2nd, 1994 to follow.

The following is a QST

As the dollar continues to slide in value against Japan's yen, the price of buying a rig goes up. An in-depth report on Newsline report number 890 coming your way right now!

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YEN VS. DOLLAR AFFECTS HAM GEAR

If you've priced new ham gear lately, you already know that getting that dream radio takes a bigger bank account than ever. Since you're paying more, that means equipment manufacturers are laughing all the way to the bank, right? Not necessarily. Industry leaders are caught in a financial squeeze of their own.

One of the Southeast's most popular ham radio conventions is the Huntsville Hamfest. Many of amateur radio's major manufacturers attend, setting up booths and showing their latest products. At this year's Hamfest the weekend of August 20th, one big company many hams expected to see did not show up. Others companies that did attend brought smaller contingents of people than has been common. Evelyn Garrison, WS7A, is President of Evelyn Garrison and Associates. She sez these are the kinds of changes hams can expect to see more of in the future.

"One thing you're going to see is a lot less show participation, a lot less manufacturers events being held at dealer levels. And when you go to a show you see a lot few hats, bags, and things people expect as freebies and promotional items from the manufacturers because they because they can't afford it. Yesterday one of the major manufacturers came here at about 4:00 o'clock in the afternoon to start setting up, because they flew all the way from the west coast to setup last night so they didn't have an extra day at the hotel. They had two people working the both, where they used to have four or five." Garrison, WS7A.

The amateur radio industry general sales slump continues. Getting most of the blame is the dollar's constant fluctuation with the Japanese yen. Sales of so called big ticket items, HF rigs, which bring the most profit are off sharply. It's not enough to counter the much smaller profits made from sales of handheld radios.

"In the past when the yen was 250 yen to the dollar, it wasn't

much of a change when 10 or 15 yen either way in fluctuation. Now days it is about a 100 yen to the dollar, when the yen changes 1 or 2 either way it makes a big difference on radios.

Unfortunately the manufacturers and dealers have been making a little less margin and I think in the very near future the prices will have to correct themselves. Unfortunately they will probably have to go up slightly." Kevin Karamanos, WD6DIH, with Yaesu USA.

Sales are off so sharply that some dealers are selling below cost. Again, Evelyn Garrison.

"They're takin' their fast pay discount or if somethings are fairly old product and has sat there for a while, and haven't paid the manufacturer they are definitely turning it around on a cost or below cost. Which means the one trying to make a little profit to stay in business has to sell at that price too." Garrison

That may seem like good news if you plan to buy, but Garrison warns about long term consequences.

"Well it's great for them today, but what's going to happen next year when they have no radio dealer in business to talk to?" Garrison

So how is the industry getting by for now? The industry is staying afloat thanks to the no-code ham.

"They're buying the handheld and luckily staying in business, but we need to upgrade those people so they buy the hf units." Garrison

While American sales are hurting, some dealers notice a pleasant side effect. Martin Jue is president of MFJ Enterprises.

"I don't have any hard numbers but I know that were selling more into Japan now." Jue, President of MFJ Enterprises.

Despite the hard times, industry leaders still think positively. With the holidays getting closer, manufacturers believe sales will pick up. What they hope for most of all, is that new hams will upgrade and head to the low bands with shiny new HF rigs that continue to climb in price.

The bottom line. We've reported it before. As the dollars value declines relative to the yen, the price of all equipment made in Japan, including ham gear, will continue to climb.

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MAGNOLIA REPORT RIP

As if to emphasize the problems of surviving in todays Amateur Radio marketplace, word that another ham radio publication has called it quits. After six years in the business, editors of The Magnolia Report ham radio newsletter are shutting down. Editor Hank Downey, K5QNE, says the newsletter's August edition is The Magnolia Report's final issue. In a message to readers Downey, cited declines in readership and advertisers coupled with rising production costs as the primary reason for the Magnolia Report going away.

The Magnolia Report was based in Jackson, Mississippi and had readers in nearly two dozen states. It's also the second major publication to go under in the last twelve months. Less than a year ago the Miami based Amateur Communications Magazine ceased publication after a four and a half year run.

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POLICE INTERFERENCE

The FCC has been busy tracing down interference problems. In Texas, it teamed up with the Baytown Police Department to solve an interference problem to the police repeater station. Commission engineers out of Houston tracked the interfering signal to a nearby dock where a cement manufacturer was using a radio control device to operate a crane loading concrete onto ships. The FCC inspectors discovered that the vendor of the crane control was a Swedish company that had no equipment authorization for marketing its radio control system in the United States. The crane operator ceased use of the device, but he also warned the FCC that the Swedish equipment was finding wide-spread albeit unlicensed use here in the U.S.A.

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911 INTERFERENCE

The Ferndale Washington FCC Office has solved a strange complaint that 911 emergency telephone service and communications to fire department units in the Skagit County, Washington, area were being blocked by Canadian truckers. In years past, the FCC has had problems with Canadian truckers using frequencies not authorized in lower British Columbia near the city of Vancouver that interfere with U.S. stations.

But in this case the truckers were not the problem. In fact, FCC engineers drove 300 miles to the problem area. Using mobile monitoring they did not detect any interfering signals from the trucks. Later they located the interference problem as originating in the fire departments own radio equipment.

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EMERGENCY LOCATOR TRANSMITTER

The Federal Aviation Administration enlisted the assistance of the FCC after an interference problem to two aviation distress calling frequencies turned up in the area of the Detroit City Airport. Engineers from the local office, using mobile direction-finding equipment, were able to determine the source of interference on both frequencies were coming from the same hangar on the airport property. Using hand held receivers, they were then able to pinpoint the offending transmitter mounted aboard an unattended, single engine Grumman American aircraft. The problem? A malfunctioning emergency locator transmitter they was quickly shut down.

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PIRATE APPEAL

A legal defense organization has come to the aid of an unlicensed broadcaster. One of its lawyers says that the government does not have the right to control the activities of so-called micro-broadcasters.

Another unlicensed broadcaster who has already been fined \$20,000 says that the government has no right to regulate his operations. Attorney Louis Hiken of the San Francisco based National Lawyers Guild Committee on Democratic Communications says that the FCC punitive action taken against Stephen P. Dunifer is grossly disproportionate given the nature of his clients alleged offenses.

About a year ago, Dunifer was dinged with the fine for operating a so-called pirate station known as Radio Free Berkley. Dunifer is a strong advocate of what he calls low power micro broadcasting. These he describes as local stations running ten watts of power or less. So he operated his own micro broadcast station until he was put off the air by the FCC.

Now his attorney says that the FCC policies on which the forfeiture to Dunifer was assessed are illegal. This is because he believes they constitute prior restraint which he says is prohibited by the First Amendment to the Constitution of the United States. He also claims that the regulations on which the fine is based violate both Due Process and Equal Protection. This, because they discriminate against minorities and the poor, and do not provide for adequate representation of counsel or opportunity for a hearing or administrative review.

Attorney Hiken says that the policies involved exceed the FCC's constitutional authority and are inconstant with the FCC's established guidelines and functions. He wants the fine levied against Dunifer rescinded at once.

According to news reports, the National Lawyers Committee on Democratic Communications is prepared to fight the Dunifer case all the way through the federal courts.

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NEW 10 GHZ DX RECORD

WB6CWN reports that he has set a new North American 10 GHz DX record. That contact took place on August 25th over a path of 698 miles to N6XQ portable XE2 who was operating at 2000' in the Sierra Los Indios Mountains on the Vizciano Peninsula of Baja California, Mexico. WB6CWN was in the Central California coastal range on 5200' Santa Rita Peak.

The record breaking path was approximately 1/3 over land and 2/3 over water. The communications methods employed included both troposcatter and ducting. For equipment WB6CWN ran 15 Watts from a Traveling Wave Tube amplifier into a 4' dish. On the other end, N6XQ's rig put out 1 Watt into a 4' dish. The CW contact took place at sundown and took about 2 hours to complete.

The previous North American 10 GHz record of 635 miles was held between N6XQ portable XE2 operating near the same location in Baja and WA6CGR near Pt. Sal on the California Coast.

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TEAM CHAMPIONSHIP PLANNED

Amateurs in the Washington, DC area have announced an ambitious plan to sponsor a second World Radiosport Team Championship in July of 1995. The event will be patterned after the games held in Seattle in 1990. This time, instead of being a stand-alone radio event, WRTC '95 will be held in conjunction with the IARU High Frequency World Championship contest held annually in July.

Competitors will be two operator teams with both members of a team must live in the same ITU zone. The administrators of the event will accept applications from interested competitors, both individuals and teams, until December 31, 1994. Selected teams and alternate operators will be notified by the Administration in the spring of 1995. The organizers also hope to be able to accommodate alternate teams and additional zone teams in some manner.

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RADIO FREE EUROPE TO MOVE

Word that Radio Free Europe and Radio Liberty, two pillars of Cold War-era broadcasting, will move to new quarters in the former parliament building in Prague. President Clinton says that he has accepted an offer from Czech President Vaclav Havel's for use of

the building.

The two stations have had their headquarters in Munich, Germany, for four decades, beaming their broadcasts into the communist world. President Clinton says that the change eastward symbolizes the transformation to democracy that has come with the collapse of communist governments and the end of the partition of Europe between West and East. President Clinton noted that his acceptance of President Havel's offer is subject to final congressional approval.

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DXAC VOTE

In DX, word that the League's DX Advisory Committee has voted to reject a proposed revision of the DXCC Rules to reinforce rules against the unethical action of making a contact for DXCC purposes with a call sign other than that issued to the operator. The majority felt that this could adversely affect club and other multi-operator stations including DXpeditions. The minority felt that this rule change was necessary to prevent observed abuses.

The DXAC also rejected a petition for new DXCC country status for the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus. DXAC members stated that the TRNC did not meet DXCC Criteria Point 1. That criteria concerns Government.

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UK RESCUE

Our congratulations to ham radio hero Ron Oswald, G7PIP of Hastings, England. Back on July 17th, Oswald intercepted a distress call from a yacht off the coast of Great Britain. The Captain of the vessel Aoda informed G7PIP that he had lost the ship's rudder. Oswald immediately contacted the Coast Guard Station in Dover. It came on frequency but was not able to hear the stricken craft. So G7PIP stayed on frequency to relay information. The Coast Guard launched a rescue helicopter that located the crippled yacht. All on board were rescued and the yacht was safely towed to shore as a result of the efforts of Ron Oswald, G7PIP.

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And for this week, that's all from the Amateur Radio Newsline.
You can write to us at:

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